

8th September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you have had a lovely summer break and have been able to spend some quality time with your family. All year groups have returned to school as of today and it is wonderful to have a full building again. I would like to extend a special welcome to new students and families; I hope you will be very happy here at LHS. As we begin the new school year, I thought it helpful to send you a reminder and update of key information so it is all in one place.

Key Dates this half term

Event	Date	Time
Year 8 Beamish Trip Parental Meeting	Monday 18th September	4-5pm
Year 12 Induction Evening	Tuesday 19th September	5-7pm
Open Evening (Y4, 5 and 6 re transition to secondary)	Tuesday 26th September	4-7pm
Year 8 Beamish Residential	Thursday 5th-Friday 6th October	
UCAS Fair (Y13)	Friday 6th October	All day
Y7 Parent Tutor Meetings	Tuesday 10th October	2.45-5pm
Year 11 Revision Support Evening	Thursday 19th October	TBC
October half term holiday	Week beginning Monday 30th October. School reopens Monday 6th November.	

Communication with School

We kindly ask that you do not email individual staff directly and use our year group emails as the central pathway for communication. We aim to respond within 48 hours at the latest. If your contact needs are more urgent, please use the school reception number: 0191 218 9500. Our main reception is open to take calls between 8am and 4pm (3.30pm on Fridays). For anything related to SEND, please email SEND@longbenton.org.uk. If your contact needs are in relation to any disruption to full attendance (see further details below), please email attendance@longbenton.org.uk.

	Email	Raising Standards Leader	Pastoral Manager
Year 7	Year7@longbenton.org.uk	Nicola McPherson	Amy Blackburn
Year 8	Year8@longbenton.org.uk	Kat Lambert	Liam Stevens
Year 9	Year9@longbenton.org.uk	Kevin Leigh	Kay Clark



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Year 10	Year10@longbenton.org.uk	Alex Maughan	Frazer Vodden
Year 11	Year11@longbenton.org.uk	Danny Harold	Louise Gardner

Attendance

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring students can fulfil their potential is an assumption widely understood but insufficiently stated – students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind; those with poor attendance tend to achieve less and that was certainly the case at GCSE level here this summer (those with 98% attendance did over twice as well on average as those with attendance below 90%). We have a duty of care to ensure high rates of attendance to school, whilst also robustly challenging poor attendance.

Our attendance target for all students is 100% (190 days of school attendance each academic year). **We have a core expectation that all students achieve over 96% attendance.** Anything below 94% is considered weak attendance; under 90% is poor attendance and, if attendance dips below 85%, we will have serious concerns. Below 90% is regarded as Persistent Absenteeism by the DfE.

If your child is unable to attend school through illness, you should inform the school immediately. Parents/carers can call student reception; absence calls should be made before 9.00am on the first day of absence. Alternatively, parents/carers can email attendance@longbenton.org.uk or report a planned future absence via the year group RSL or PM. Holiday absence requests should be emailed to the above address.

If you know your child will be absent for a specific period of time, it is useful to inform the school of the expected day of return. If you do not supply us with this information, then we will expect a call or email on every day of absence. Without this, we will contact the parent/carer on each day of absence to ensure that we are aware of the child's whereabouts; this is a safeguarding measure.

Where a child is absent through illness or medical appointments, this will normally be counted as authorised absence where proof is provided. Where we have concerns over excessive absence patterns through illness, we will need to discuss this with parents/carers in order to gain a better understanding of the issues impacting attendance.

We ask that, as far as possible, dental and medical appointments are arranged outside of school hours. Where appointments have to be made during the school day, these should be made either early in the morning or towards the end of the school day. Students are expected to attend school before and/or after their appointment where possible. Proof of appointment should be provided by email to attendance@longbenton.org.uk or handed in to reception.

Uniform

Students have made a great start with regards to uniform. Uniform is an important part of our school's identity. It reinforces who we are as a community and allows students to feel pride in their school. It also helps prepare students for life after school, where many will have to dress smartly for work.

A reminder about key points:

- Blazers must be worn at all times. (They are NOT optional but jumpers are optional if students are warm).
- Shoes should be plain black.
- Trousers/skirts/shorts should be tailored/smart and plain black.
- Shirts should be tucked in and ties on at all times.
- No false/acrylic nails or excessive false eyelashes or excessive fake tan are allowed.

The following consequences will be in place if students are not following the uniform policy:

- 1st uniform issue - text sent home via Class Charts
- 2nd uniform issue - phone call home
- 3rd uniform issue - 45 minute reflection after school
- 4th uniform issue - student is isolated until the issue is resolved

If there is ever a genuine reason why your child is not able to wear the correct school uniform, then please contact the relevant year group RSL or Pastoral Manager (email address above). We have clean/new uniform stock that we can loan to students.

Expectations - Reminders regarding rules and routines

School Code of Conduct and Home School Agreement Our vision is to be an excellent school for our local community; a school of first choice that students are proud and happy to come to every day. We have high expectations of our students and students and teach them to be responsible for their own behaviour and understand how this should reflect the values of the school. Students are expected to follow the **Code of Conduct and Home School Agreement** which are here on our website:

<https://longbenton.org.uk/learning/personal-development>

Please complete this [form](#) to acknowledge that you and your child(ren) have read both documents and agree to follow them.

New reward - HERO points All students can now earn 'HERO' points during registration and every lesson during the day. To get these points students just need to be **Here** (attend), be **Equipped** (minimum pen/pencil), be **Ready** to learn (in the correct uniform and making a positive start to the lesson) and **On** time. These points are recorded and tracked in ClassCharts. They are then used to earn places on rewards activities and trips at the end of each academic term.

Changes to the consequence system Students can be asked to wait behind for a **maximum period of 10 minutes** at break times, lunch time or at the end of the day if their behaviour in the lesson prior is judged, in the opinion of the teacher, to be unacceptable. These periods will provide teachers time to address concerning behaviour as well as providing students additional opportunity to complete work that was not completed during the lesson time. These periods will not be 'formal' periods of reflection and will be set completely at the teachers' discretion, with no prior notice given to parents.

Consequence system:

Opportunity 1 - First warning - Student behaviour is affecting their learning and that of others. This is recorded on Class Charts.



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Opportunity 2 – Second warning – Student behaviour continues to affect their learning and that of others. This is recorded on Class Charts.

After School Reflection 45min - If student behaviour does not improve following warnings an After School Reflection will be issued (45 minutes, held on the same day, from 3.15-4.00pm). The teacher will hold a restorative conversation during the reflection period and/or before the next lesson.

Reflection Remove - If a student continues to persistently disrupt the learning of the class they will be removed from that lesson. They will also complete an After School Reflection (45 minutes, held on the same day, from 3.15-4.00pm). Parents will be contacted if their child has had to be removed from a lesson to discuss behaviours and next steps.

Students must attend these sanctions or further sanctions will be applied (i.e. KIDMAP Reset Room/Suspension). The After School Reflections are held on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings from 3.15-4.00pm. However, the school reserves the right to set a reflection after school on any day of the week. In addition, the school can impose double or triple After School Extended reflections on a single evening (e.g. a 3.15-5.30pm reflection) may be set if the student is accumulating reflections rapidly as a result of unacceptable behaviour. Parents will be contacted if this is the case.

Inspire Curriculum

You will be able to choose from a fantastic range of after school enrichment activities and clubs, both academic and non-academic from Monday 11th September. **We will run breakfast session clubs from 8.00-8.40am; afternoon clubs and activities run from 3.15-3.45pm.** Enrichment clubs and activities are an excellent way to help accelerate your academic progress. They also allow you to gain experience and skills in areas that might not be part of your everyday curriculum, develop your personal skills and attributes and be a real part of our school community.

Our 'Inspire' enrichment offer will be on our website and sent out to parents/published on social media from Friday. There is no need to sign up in advance; students can simply turn up.

There is an expectation that students will attend a minimum of one session until 4pm per week; we expect to see all Y10 and 11 staying until 4pm. We are extremely proud of the fantastic, varied offer that our staff have put together, with clubs ranging from Lego to choir, animal care to Latin and everything in between. It is a wonderful opportunity for our students to make new friendships, expand their CVs and develop those essential life skills that extra-curricular clubs provide. We are strongly encouraging our students to make the most of these free opportunities.

Reading

A new expectation from this term is that all students read for 10 minutes every day. We expect students in KS3 at the very least to have a reading book with them at all times. Students can loan reading books via their form tutor in the first instance if they do not have a book.

Hailsham Avenue/Gates





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Traffic is heavy on Hailsham Avenue at present. Please be aware that there is a 'safer school streets' trial in place in relation to Benton Dene Primary School which has closed to Weardale, Clydesdale, Allandale and Avenues to traffic during 'school run' times.. This, combined with the adjustment to our school day timings, has made collecting students by car more difficult. We are still closing our gates to traffic temporarily each afternoon when our students are leaving the site at the busiest point. We will be opening a second pedestrian gate as part of a trial from Monday to try and ease congestion out onto Hailsham Avenue.

I hope this covers everything that you will need to prepare for the term ahead. I am very much looking forward to seeing you all at one of our upcoming events and to successful joint working this year to ensure that all students at Longbenton High School can flourish.

Please follow us on social media where we share regular updates from our school community.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school should you have any queries.

Yours faithfully

Kelly Holbrook
Headteacher